

Group: Starburst
Show: Jack and the Beanstalk
Venue: Samuel Cody School, Farnborough
Date: Friday 15th December 2012
Director: Peter Woodford
Producer: Caz Robertson & Jodie Dawson
Choreographer: Liz Woodford
Musical Director: Andy Milburn



Jack and the Beanstalk – the pantomime is crafted by Peter Long and Keith Rawnsley, who also write for the television programme Have I Got News for You. Whilst keeping to a traditional story with both beanstalk and giant the principal characters also include Major Rodewerks and Private Access.

Front of House: A great buzz front of house with the audience very eager to see the production. Simply but effectively organised team front of house.

Theatre Ambience: The theatre was laid out in traditional style but with plenty of room between rows. All the decorations and subdued lighting added to the feeling of expectancy.

The Programme: The 24 page glossy programme is, as usual, stunning. The style of presentation changes for each production but it is always innovative and refreshing. There is always plenty of information about the cast and production team.

Scenery/Set/Props: The seven sets were simply created but very effective. The use of curtain back drops provided a swift change from one scene to another. Various pieces of scenery were 'mobile' and could be manhandled by cast as well as crew. Particular mention must be made of the 'beanstalk' which worked extremely well and had the younger members of the audience totally convinced. The construction of the Giant was very realistic. The team created an effective set of props.

Lighting & Sound: The sound and lighting teams used their skills to enhance the work of the cast in a very effective way.

Wardrobe & Make-Up: The costumes were a delight to behold and the attention to detail including shoes is to be commended. Make-up was appropriately overdeveloped in some and applicable in others.

The Production:

From arrival through to departure the whole theatre was a buzz of activity and oozing enthusiasm. Quite obviously the audience were expecting an exciting evening's entertainment and that is what they were treated to. The cast, predominantly under 21, danced, sang and joked their way through the traditional story lines of the panto with consummate style; the principals setting and maintaining a high standard throughout. The quality of the choreography was exceedingly high and must have taken a great deal of patience considering the double junior chorus. The large technical crew played a vital role in enhancing the work of the cast on the stage. The costumes were a delight to behold and really gave that extra dazzle particularly in the ballroom scenes. From the design of the beanstalk to the creation of the Giant - through all the sound, light and scene change cues to the casting of the principals, this was one smooth panto. Oh yes it was! An evening with Starburst is always guaranteed to lift the spirits - on a cold, damp December evening this production of Jack and the Beanstalk was no exception.

A short review will appear in due course in the South-east section of the NODA website.

Kay Rowan - District 14 Regional Representative